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**Inventory for
Manuscript Collection
MS-320**

**Cutts Family Shipping Papers
Inclusive dates: n.d., 1793-1815**

by
Tracy Lamaestra
October 2012

Shelf feet: 1.5 linear feet
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Accession no. 94.87.334

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Abstract

Cutts Family

Shipping papers, n.d., 1793-1815

1 horizontal box, (1.5 Shelf feet)

Ship captains, owners, merchants and builders from Pepperellborough (Saco), Maine. Eighteenth and early nineteenth-century shipping and store records of the Cutts family. Letter “copy” book and account book of Richard Cutts (includes found loose papers) as well as two other Cutts family account books. Includes vessel records of the *Betsy* (Ship), *Bellona* (Ship), *Commerce* (Schooner), *Eunice* (Ship), *Hazard* (Ship), *Juno* (Ship), *Jupiter* (Ship), *Mercury* (Ship), *Narcissus* (Ship), *Phoenix* (Ship), *Plumper* (Ship) and *Yorick* (Ship). The collection is arranged as follows: Series I. Correspondence, Series II. Account books.

Gift from Charles E. Burden, 1994.

MS-320. Accession No. 94.87.334

Finding aid available in repository; folder-level control.

Added entries—persons:

Cutts, Dominicus

Cutts, Foxwell

Cutts, Richard, *Captain*

Cutts Jr., Thomas

Cutts Sr., Thomas

Added entries—corporate bodies (including vessels):

Betsy (Ship)

Bellona (Ship)

Commerce (Schooner)

Eunice (Ship)

Hazard (Schooner)

Juno (Ship)

Jupiter (Ship)

Mercury (Ship)

Narcissus (Ship)

Phoenix (Ship)

Plumper (Ship)

Yorick (Ship)

Added entries—key terms:

Accounts

Account books

Freight and freightage

Letters

Lumber trade

Merchant seamen

Rum

Seamanship

Ship captains

Shipping

Sugar trade
United States—History—1797-1801
Voyages and travels
Wages

Acquisition

The Cutts family papers were a gift from Charles E. Burden on November 29, 1994, accession no. 94.87.334.

Provenance

The collection came to the Maine Maritime Museum along with other assorted material (books, serials, catalogs, music, ephemera, misc., magazine prints, photographs, technical drawings and manuscripts) as a gift from Charles E. Burden. The donor purchased these items from dealers through the mail and at antique shows, flea markets, auctions and shops.

Restrictions

There are no restrictions on the use of these materials for study or research.

Physical Condition

This collection is eighteenth and early nineteenth-century documents. The letter “copy” book has a pamphlet binding with worn covers of marble paper. Some of the pages are dog eared; page one has a missing corner. The copybook is also discolored and acidic. The account book (1793-1800) has a trimmed spine covered in suede. The spine is loose and the suede trim is torn. The front and back boards are covered with marble paper, which is worn. Pages in the account book are acidic, discolored and warped. Many pages are broken free from the bind. There are missing pages to the rear of the account book.

The larger account book (1796-1797) cover is of marbled paper. The cover is dog eared and torn with a broken bind. Pages are dog eared, acidic, discolored, warped and stained. Some corners are missing to pages. The account book (1799-1815) cover is made of suede. This cover is worn and loose. Pages are acidic and discolored.

Processing Notes

The letter copy book was separated into its own series from the three account books as it served a different purpose. The three account books were arranged chronologically. Loose papers (misc. receipts) found in account book (1799-1815) were placed in a folder and arranged chronologically. This folder with loose papers was placed after the account book (1799-1815).

The collection is arranged as follows: Series I. Correspondence, Series II. Account books. An index of captains and vessel names was created for each book

Biographical Notes

Thomas Cutts Sr. (b. 1736-d. 1821)

Thomas Cutts Sr. was born on April 5, 1736 in Kittery, Maine to Richard Cutts (b. 1693-d. 1790) and Eunice Curtis (b. 1698-d. 1795). He married Elizabeth Scammon (b. 1744-d. 1803) on August 24, 1762. They had children Mary (b. 1763-d. 1796), Foxwell (b. 1765-d. 1816), Elizabeth (b. 1766-d. 1810), Thomas (b. 1769-d. 1839), Richard D. (b. 1771-d. 1845), Sarah (b. 1774-d. 1845), Dominicus (b. 1778-d. 1844) and Eunice (b. 1782-1852).¹

Thomas Cutts Sr. was originally from Kittery, Maine where he was a clerk for William Pepperill.² In 1758, he relocated to Saco, Maine with \$100 his father gave him. He opened a small shop in a room in a residence with this money. Profits from his store allowed him to buy up portions of what was known to be Cutts Island (now Factory Island). This island was in the middle of the Saco River.² Thomas Sr. bought this land (known as Indian Island, Great Lot) from William P. Sparhawk the nephew to William Pepperell for \$2000.^{3, 4} He built a small house for himself on the island where he lived for twenty years and operated a general merchandizing store from the residence.² The Saco region was a great resource for fishing, lumbering, shipbuilding and sawmilling. Cutts invested in timber lands, milling, shipbuilding, navigation and was heavily involved in the lumber trade with the West Indies with proceeds from his business.² Moreover, he built bridges, ferries, factories, warehouses and wharfs. In particular, he along with his four sons and some Saco men started Proprietor's Wharf.⁴ Thomas Cutts constructed a large two-story mansion on the island in 1782. This a gambrel roofed house was built on a hill where he could keep a watchful eye on his vessels in the harbor.¹

He owned a large number of vessels. In particular, he owned five eighths of the ship *Plumper* along with his sons, Richard Cutts (one quarter) and Thomas Cutts Jr. (one eighth). The *Plumper* (Ship) was seized by the French frigate *Insurgent* on January 11, 1799 when on a commercial voyage to Surinam, Captain Daniel Deshon as master. The vessel was later released on January 22, 1799 by decree of the tribunal of commerce and prizes.⁵ Captains Solomon Coit, Seth Storer and Samuel Hartley were some other masters of his vessels.⁶

Thomas Cutts Sr. was also the founder of the Saco Bank and Saco Iron Works, Selectman, town Treasurer, Representative to the General Court, Councilor of Massachusetts and a Revolutionary War officer.³ He was assigned 1st Lieutenant of Scammon's Massachusetts Regiment from May to December 1775 and Captain of the Massachusetts Militia, 1776-1779.¹

He died on January 10, 1821. His estate was estimated at about \$100,000.² The house was listed at \$6000 and the island at \$30,000. He also owned two sawmills, a treble grist mill and various mechanic shops and residences. Thomas Sr. owned land in Saco, Biddeford, Hollis, Buxton and Scarborough as well as ten shares of the Saco Boom and pews in the meeting house. His son Dominicus, eventually, sold off the family property to Bostonians.⁴

Foxwell Cutts (b. 1765-d. 1816)

Foxwell Cutts, oldest son of Thomas Cutts Sr. and Elizabeth Scammon, was born on April 7, 1765 in Pepperellborough (now Saco), Maine. He married Sarah Andrews Scammon on August 2, 1789. Sarah A. died in 1806 and a year later, on June 24, 1807 he married Hannah

Dustin Page. They had children Chas. Foxwell (b. 1808-d. 1855), Sarah Elizabeth Scammon (b. 1810), Mary Abbott (b. 1811-d. 1868) and Hannah Foxwell (b.1816-d. 1847).⁷

Foxwell Cutts assisted his father and brothers with the family shipping business in Saco. The father made him a partner in the family business along with his brothers, Dominicus, Richard and Thomas Jr.,. He was also engaged in navigation prior to the War of 1812. He owned profitable vessels, which sailed large cargos worldwide.⁶

Additionally, Foxwell handled sales and business accounts for the Cutts' general merchandizing store. He helped with the warehouses and engaged in lumbering as well. He also corresponded with shipmasters on voyages and at ports concerning cargo for the family shipping business. Foxwell died on June 6, 1816 in Saco. His wife died on August 14, 1847 at the age of 63.⁷

Thomas Cutts Jr. (b. 1769-d. 1839)

Thomas Cutts, Foxwell, son of Thomas Cutts Sr. and Elizabeth Scammon, was born on June 8, 1769 in Pepperellborough (now Saco), Maine. He married Elizabeth Hight (d. 1803) on January 31, 1802. They had son William Temple (b.1803-d. at sea). He remarried Mary Augusta Cook (d. 1866) daughter of Honorable Orchard Cook on June 2, 1807. They had children Mary Elizabeth (b. 1810-d.1878), Thos. (b. 1810) and Julia Augusta Adelaide (b. 1826-d. 1868).⁷

Thomas Jr. was a sea captain and a successful merchant. He operated the family shipping business out of Saco with his father and brothers: Foxwell, Dominicus and Richard. The father made him a partner in the family business along with his brothers.⁶ He succeeded his father as a shipbuilder and ship owner and was put in charge of the large store and shipyard.⁸ He handled sales and business accounts for the Cutts' general merchandizing store. He ran the warehouses and engaged in lumbering as well.

Thomas Jr. also went to sea as a captain on his father's vessels worldwide.⁶ He corresponded with shipmasters on voyages and at ports concerning cargoes when handling the family business affairs back in Saco. Thomas Jr. owned many vessels including the *Mercury* (Ship),⁹ *Victory* (Ship)¹⁰ and the *Plumper* (Ship).⁵ The ship *Mercury* with Captain Samuel Gilpatrick as master was seized on November 3, 1799 by the French privateer *La Favorite*. Captain Gilpatrick was taken prisoner and the *Mercury* (Ship) was taken to Basse-Terre. The vessel and cargo were condemned by the French after a trial on November 9, 1799 for not having a "role d'équipage or proof of the cargo's neutrality." The vessel was later repossessed by the Cutts in 1800.¹¹ He died in July 1839 at 70 years of age.¹ His wife died on June 3, 1866 at 81.⁷

Richard D. Cutts (b. 1771-d. 1845)

Richard D. Cutts, son of Thomas Cutts Sr. and Elizabeth Scammon, was born on June 28, 1771 in Cutts Island, Saco, Maine to Thomas Cutts Sr. (b. 1736-b. 1821) and Elizabeth Scammon (b. 1745-d. 1803). He married Anna Paine (b.1759-d?) the sister of President Madison's wife, Dolly Madison. They had children Richard (b. 1810-d. 1815), Dolly Payne Madison (b.1811-d.1838), James Madison (b. 1805-d. 1863), Mary Estrell Elizabeth (. b.1814-d?), Richard Dominicus (b. 1817-d. 1883), Thomas (b. 1806-d. 1838) and Walter Coles (b. 1808-lost at sea).⁷

Richard graduated Harvard in 1790, studied law and engaged extensively in navigation and commercial pursuits. He was elected as a Democrat to Congress, 1810-1813 and represented the state of Massachusetts as a U. S. Representative from 1799 to 1800. Later he was appointed

as Superintendent General of Military Supplies, 1813-1817 and Second Comptroller of the U. S. Treasury 1817-1829.¹²

He operated the family shipping business out of Saco with his father and brothers: Foxwell, Dominicus and Thomas Jr.,. The father made him a partner in the family business along with his brothers.⁶ Richard was a shipmaster as well. He voyaged on the *Mercury* (Ship) in 1796 to Charleston, South Carolina with lumber, then to Cowes with rice and then to St. Ubes, Portugal with salt.¹³ He kept records of his expenses on the *Mercury* (Ship) in account books when at Charleston, Cowes and Hamburg. Seamen accounts and wages were kept by him as well.¹⁴ He had a vested interest in the family vessels as he owned one quarter of the ship *Plumper* with his father (Thomas Sr.) and brother (Thomas Jr.)⁵ and one-third of the *Mercury* (Ship) with his father.¹¹

He died in Washington D. C. on April 7, 1845. Richard was initially buried at St. John's Graveyard, but was reinterred in 1857 at Oak Hill Cemetery in Georgetown, D.C. His wife died in 1832 and is buried at the same location.¹⁵

Dominicus Cutts (b. 1778-d. 1844)

Dominicus Cutts was born on May 4, 1778 in Berwick, Maine to Thomas Cutts Sr. and Elizabeth Scammon. He married Polly Chadborne (b. 1780-d. 1853) on April 23, 1832.¹

Dominicus was a sea captain. He went to sea on his father's vessels. The father made him a partner in the family shipping business along with his brothers Foxwell, Thomas Jr. and Richard.⁶ He assisted his father and brothers with the family shipping business in Saco. He handled sales and business accounts for the Cutts' general merchandizing store. He helped with the warehouses and engaged in shipping as well. He also corresponded with shipmasters on voyages and at ports concerning cargo shipments for the family business. In particular, he exchanged letters with his brother Captain Richard Cutts when aboard the *Mercury* (Ship) in 1796.¹³

He was a Private in the First Regiment, Massachusetts Militia during the War of 1812. Dominicus was also listed as a prisoner of war in the War of 1812, Prisoner of War Records, 1812-1815. He died on May 9, 1844 in Berwick, Maine.¹

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Scope and Content Notes

This is a collection of eighteenth and early nineteenth-century shipping and store records of the Cutts family. They were ship captains, owners, merchants and builders from Pepperellborough (Saco), Maine. The Cutts were heavily involved in the lumber trade. They sold a variety of products such as lumber, shingles, hides, coffee, rum, pork, tobacco, molasses, corn and sugar at their general merchandising store. Documents include a letter copy book and three account books with some accompanying loose papers. The letter copy book and account book, 1799-1915, were used by Richard Cutts. The account book (1796-1797) includes crew wages and crew accounts. This is also an account book for the *Mercury* (Ship) with Captain Richard Cutts as master. Account books pertain to the Cutts store. This includes detailed sales (itemized debits and credits) and business accounts for a wide variety of goods to named individuals or vessels. Vessels accounts are for the *Betsy* (Ship), *Bellona* (Ship), *Commerce* (Schooner), *Eunice* (Ship), *Hazard* (Ship), *Juno* (Ship), *Jupiter* (Ship), *Mercury* (Ship), *Narcissus* (Ship), *Phoenix* (Ship), *Plumper* (Ship) and *Yorick* (Ship).

In the letter copy book, Richard Cutts, master of the ship *Mercury*, writes to "Sir" who is Thomas Cutts Sr. his father. He also corresponds with his brothers: Richard Cutts, Foxwell Cutts and Dominicus Cutts. The initials "R. C." stand for Richard Cutts and the initials "D. C." stand for Dominicus Cutts. He also addressed Foxwell as "Fox" and Dominicus as "Dom" in the copybook. Captain Samuel Hartley is referenced throughout the letter copy book. Captain Hartley was a great Saco sea captain. Richard Cutts also remarks about "runaway negroes" in Savannah in a letter dated March 4, 1796. On March 10, 1796, he comments about marine worms eating the bottom of his ship and the small pox epidemic. In a June 15, 1796 correspondence, Richard Cutts writes when in Hamburg over conflict with France:

" the present news in this City is that Hamburg vefsels are released in France where they have been detained as security for not acknowledging their minister, which has cost them a few thousand ducats it is supposed or have been visited by them, likewise they have had an action with the Austrians near Frankfort in which they took four thousand prisoners with their Baggage and artillery and they are evacuating Frankfort to them." (Letter copy book #1, 1796)

Captain Richard Cutts also writes on September 22, 1796 that the wheat trade in Jaffra on the Barbary Coast reaps great profits for ship masters. The voyages to Jaffra take only six weeks, so he finds this tempting, but he goes on to say there are great risks, also. He writes American vessels have been taken and suffered most “cruelly.” (Letter copy book #1, 1796)

Inside the front page for the account book (1799-1815) is “Richard Cutts Ledger/Began July 1799.” There are also notations for installments and dividends for the Saco Wharf on another unnumbered page in the same account book. Richard Cutts handled most of the transactions in this book with assistance from Thomas Cutts Jr. An account was settled with Richard Cutts and Thomas Cutts Jr. for building the ship *Betsey* on January 15, 1800 (page 1 right side). There is also an account summary for Thomas Cutts Jr. on the ship *Minerva* (page 25). Foxwell Cutts has an account summary in October 1804 as well as Thomas Cutts Sr. on September 26, 1803.

Description of Series

Series I. Correspondence (1796): This is a letter copybook of Captain Richard Cutts when master of the *Mercury*. He corresponds with Thomas Cutts Sr. (father), Dominicus Cutts (brother), Foxwell Cutts (brother), Captain Samuel Hartley and ship agents.

Series II. Account books (1793-1815): Account book (1793-1800) includes store purchases of named individuals or vessels in addition to some labor accounts. Vessel accounts are for the *Betsey* (Ship), *Commerce* (Schooner), *Narcissus* (Ship), *Plumper* (Ship) and *Mercury* (Ship). The account book (1796-1797) includes crew wages and crew accounts. This is also an account book for the *Mercury* (Ship) with Captain Richard Cutts as master. Account book (1799-1815) of Captain Richard Cutts includes the *Betsey* (Ship), *Hazard* (Schooner), *Mercury* (Ship), *Eunice* (Ship), *Phoenix* (Ship), *Jupiter* (Ship), *Yorick* (Ship), *Bellona* (Ship) and *Warp* (Brigantine) accounts and business transactions of named individuals. There is an index to the rear of the account book. Loose papers found in this account book (1799-1815) include miscellaneous receipts.

**MS-320 Cutts Family Papers
Container List**

Series I. Correspondence

Book #1 Letter copy book, 1796, Captain Richard Cutts

Series II. Account books

Book #2 Account book, 1793-1800 (various vessels)

Book #3 Account book, 1796-1797, *Mercury* (Ship) (includes crew wages)

Book #4 Account book, 1799-1815, Captain Richard Cutts (various vessels)

Folder 1 Loose papers found in account book #4, n.d., 1799-1815

MS-320 Cutts Family Papers

Index of Captains and Vessel Names

Captains or Vessel/Types	Book # / Page #
Banks, <i>Captain</i>	#2/ 12b ; #4/22a, 22b, 36a, 38a, 40a
<i>Bellona</i> (Ship)	#4/25a, 31a, 44b, 49b, 50b, 53a, 64b, 65a, 66a
<i>Betsey</i> (Ship)	#2/1a ; #4/1b, 4a, 5b, 6b, 7b, 10b, 11b, 22a, 25a, 26a, 29b, 36a, 38a, 40a, 45b
<i>Castor</i> (Ship)	#4/44a, 44b, 49b, 52a, 64b
Chauncey, <i>Captain</i>	#1/32
Cole, James	#4/25a
<i>Columbia</i> (Ship)	#4/39b, 58b
<i>Commerce</i> (Schooner)	#2/ 6b, 10a, 12a, 12b, 14a
<i>Eunice</i> (Ship)	#4/6b, 11b, 25a, 25b, 29b, 32a, 33b, 41a, 46a
<i>Fox</i> (Schooner)	#2/12b
Gilpatrick, <i>Captain</i>	#2/29a ; #3/45
Gilpatrick, Samuel	#4/4a
Gray, Joseph	#4/43a
Haley, Joshua	#4/1a
Hartley, <i>Captain</i>	#1/10,12,16,17,31 ; #4/42b, 43a, 50a, 50b, 55a, 60a
<i>Hazard</i> (Schooner)	#4/2a, 29b ; #4/6b, 10b, 11b, 40a, 45a, 45a, 45b
Higgins, <i>Captain</i>	#4/5a
<i>Hope</i> (Ship)	#4/39b, 54b, 57b, 58b, 60b, 61b
Hutchins, <i>Captain</i>	#4/62a, 63b, 64a
Jardan, <i>Captain</i>	#2/19a
Jones, <i>Captain</i>	#1/1
<i>Juno</i> (Ship)	#4/31a, 49b, 50a, 50b
<i>Jupiter</i> (Ship)	#4/11b, 42b, 43a, 49b, 50a, 50b, 55a, 62a, 62b, 64b
Libby, <i>Captain</i>	#4/49b, 50a
Marshal, <i>Captain</i>	#4/43a
<i>Mercury</i> (Ship)	#1/16,17,18,19 ; #2/18b, 29a ; #4/11b, 20a, 45a, 45b
[Milliken], Alexander	#4/45b
<i>Minerva</i> (Ship)	#1/24 ; #4/25a
<i>Mohawk</i> (vessel type unknown)	#1/14
Moulton, <i>Captain</i>	#1/1,2 ; #4/32a
Moulton, Daniel	#2/6b, 13a, 13b
<i>Narcissus</i> (Ship)	#2/6b, 8a, 8b, 13a
<i>Ocean</i> (Ship)	#4/45b, 49a
<i>Phoenix</i> (Ship)	#4/39a
<i>Plumper</i> (Ship)	#2/27a ; #4/45a, 45b
Russell, Jonathan	#1/5,18,22
Salter, <i>Captain</i>	#116
Scammons, N. [Nathaniel], <i>Captain</i>	#1/2 ; #2/3a
Scammons, Nathaniel	#4/42a

Southerland, <i>Captain</i>	#1/3,10,12,16,17
Stevens, <i>Captain</i>	#2/6a ; #4/36a
Stevens, Osa	#2/14a
Storer, <i>Captain</i>	#2/28b
<i>Tumper</i> (Ship)	#2/21b ; #4/10b, 11b, 25b
<i>Warp</i> (Brig)	#4/49b, 54
Waterhouse, <i>Captain</i>	#4/39b
Wilds, <i>Captain</i>	#1/30
<i>Yorick</i> (Ship)	#4/51a, 51b, 64b